

### **Moran Shares Stories of Kansans Impacted by Haiti Earthquake**

January 21, 2010

Madame Speaker, Since the earthquake hit Haiti on January 12<sup>th</sup>, we all have watched with sadness as the death toll rose, prayed for those affected, and rejoiced when survivors were found. It is an event that has directly touched the lives of people around the world, including many in my home state of Kansas.

This week, I have heard some incredibly touching stories about Kansans affected by the earthquake. Many were in Haiti to serve and care for those less fortunate than them.

31 year-old Ann Varghese (VAR-Geese), a graduate of Southeast High in Wichita and the University of Kansas, was trapped under the rubble of a hotel for 55 hours.

In a tiny, dark space just three feet high and five feet long, Ann spent over two days with 5 other people, without water and sharing only gum and a lone tootsie pop. Through nothing short of a miracle, Ann made it out alive, but sadly two of the trapped did not.

Kim Bentrrott of Belleville, Kansas, and her husband Patrick, remain in Haiti. They made it out of their 3<sup>rd</sup> floor apartment just before the building collapsed. Employed through Global Ministries, they have lost their headquarters, school, offices, and medical clinic, but must stay to complete the process of adopting a son, Solomon.

Now 14 months old, Kim and Patrick rescued Solomon from a Haitian orphanage as a newborn, and their dedication to providing a loving family for Solomon is an inspiration.

Six residents of the Dodge City area, including John Maples and Greg Love of Montezuma, Terry and Martha Major and Doug McGraw of Pierceville, and Clayton Stolfus of Meade all survived the catastrophe. Unfortunately, this team from the Independent Christian Alliance Ministries is still awaiting word about a possible return to the United States.

Naomi Streck, a Norton native and Wichita State graduate, is part of a 21-member team from the Centre for Children International Lifeline that escaped unhurt and has returned safely to Kansas.

Fortunately there is some positive news, as well. After six years of red tape, Scott and Wanda

Miller of Hesston are safely at home with their newly adopted Haitian son, 16 year-old Junior Oranvil Miller. Many others, such as Jake and Amy Glover of Hays, are among the families currently in the process of adopting children from Haiti.

It gives me hope to see so many Americans and people around the world putting aside cultural, racial, and political differences to band together in our effort to rebuild the damaged nation. All who have donated money and supplies, served on search and rescue teams, and prayed for those affected, deserve our gratitude.

As for those of us in Congress, we are committed to doing everything in our power to ensure a swift and safe conclusion to this crisis. The people of Haiti and those affected by this tragedy are in my thoughts and prayers.